

2008 Annual Report

The Coordinating Board for Early Childhood was established by statute in August 2004 to be the state's public/private entity for coordinating a cohesive system of early childhood programs and services that will result in the healthy development of, and high quality education for, all Missouri children from birth through age five.

Mission-Related Accomplishments

Pre-Kindergarten Education

The Missouri Panel for School Readiness: Focus on Pre-Kindergarten Education (Pre-K Panel) was convened by the CBEC between May and October 2008. The Panel was convened to provide advice and counsel regarding how to: (1) build on the State's current investments in early care and education programs for preschoolers and (2) seize new opportunities to create a strong network of programs backed by policies that will ensure the State's publicly funded programs for this age group consistently promote children's school readiness. The Panel was not asked to determine a funding mechanism for pre-kindergarten programs. The Panel's report was accepted by the CBEC in November 2008 and will form the basis for the Board's future work on developing a plan for a comprehensive pre-kindergarten program for the state. Some recommendations may be modified while developing that plan.

The Pre-K Panel established that the purpose of a publicly funded pre-kindergarten system should be: To ensure that Missouri's children have access to high-quality pre-kindergarten learning experiences that prepare them to succeed in school and life. The Panel recommendations define the framework for such a program.

Recommendation 1. By the end of the 2011 Missouri legislative session, statutory authority should be established for publicly funded pre-kindergarten in Missouri. A sliding fee scale or other financial structure should be in place by December 2011 to ensure that program enrollment is accessible and affordable to all age-eligible children.

Recommendation 2. Any center- or family-based program (e.g., private, for-profit, non-profit, faith-based) that meets the standards established for publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs in Missouri should be able to participate and receive public funds.

Recommendation 3. Enrollment in publicly funded pre-kindergarten should be voluntary for Missouri families.

Recommendation 4. Enrollment in publicly funded pre-kindergarten should be available to Missouri's children for two years prior to their entry into kindergarten. Enrollment in publicly funded pre-kindergarten should begin in fall 2012.

Recommendation 5. All publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs should be held accountable for meeting identified, research-based program standards that will be established by the State and required of programs at the time of the pre-kindergarten program's initiation in fall 2012. These program standards should address: safe and healthy environments, responsive interactions, child health and social-emotional development, developmentally-appropriate learning goals, developmentally-appropriate curriculum, staff qualifications, class size and teacher: student ratio, parent/guardian involvement, community involvement, and length of the pre-kindergarten day and duration of the year. The Missouri Coordinating Board for Early Childhood will be responsible for recommending, monitoring, and advising the processes related to (1) establishing these standards and guidelines and (2) establishing the initial variances and timelines for rectifying them.

Recommendation 6. All publicly funded pre-kindergarten programs should be required, at the time of the pre-kindergarten program's initiation, to use a uniform, standardized child assessment process for tracking and monitoring children's progress and informing the instructional process.

Recommendation 7. By fall 2012, the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's data tracking system (MOSIS) should be used to establish a uniform, child-specific (aggregate level) longitudinal measure of outcomes for children participating in the State's pre-kindergarten program.

Recommendation 8. At the state level, a system of oversight for the State's publicly funded pre-kindergarten should be established. The system's functions should include: coordination and collaboration, standards alignment, maximization of fiscal resources, enforcement of program standards, and data collection and analysis.

Recommendation 9. The state system of oversight should identify a local or regional entity to facilitate design of a mixed delivery system that is responsive to community needs and resources.

The Panel's full report includes a brief rationale for each recommendation and a full description of its work. A copy of the full report is attached to this report or it can be accessed at the Board's Web site.

Professional Development

Missouri currently offers many programs and services to improve the performance of professionals in the field of early childhood education. However, some of these efforts are duplicative and not focused on specific performance objectives. In an effort to identify strategies to create a more comprehensive, coordinated and effective professional development system, the Board engaged a consultant in February and received a report in September. (Full report is available on the Board's Web site.) The Board is currently in the process of encouraging discussion and action on the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1. Establish one set of regions (approximately 10) for the implementation of all activities that support professional development for the workforce in early childhood and school age/youth development programs (i.e., clock-hour workshops, college credit classes, credentials, and technical assistance), to be used by all departments and for all funding streams that support this work.

Recommendation 2. Funnel funds allocated from all state sources for these activities into one non-governmental administrative organization, or one collaborative among two or three such organizations, for state-related functions and distribution to local organizations in the regions.

Recommendation 3. Require this collaborative to ensure that the staff members at the regional level who deliver professional development services incorporate a variety of content expertise, such as accreditation, inclusion of children with special needs, health and mental health issues, infant/toddler programming and youth development, and a variety of skills, such as coaching, mentoring and adult education.

Recommendation 4. Ensure that all functions of a professional development system are delivered, delineating state-level functions from those delivered at the regional level.

Recommendation 5. Develop a strategy to address the certified teacher shortage for early childhood education, using the recent CAYL Institute report (Washington, 2008) as its call to action.

Recommendation 6. Ask the Governor to appoint a representative from Higher Education to the CBEC.

Educational Opportunities for Missouri Early Childhood Leaders

The Board was offered two exceptional opportunities during the year to learn more about early childhood development and the efforts of other states to address policy issues in a coordinated manner. Event sponsors paid all expenses for Missouri to send teams to the following:

1. Policy Retreat for Early Childhood Advisory Council Leadership, June 19-20, Denver. Missouri was one of 32 states represented at this meeting. Our team members included Sharon Rohrbach (CEO, Nurses for Newborns), Doris Hallford (DSS) and Karen Bartz (CBEC chair). "Early childhood advisory councils" is a

generic term being used to refer to those entities that have or are being developed in states to provide leadership to a comprehensive, coordinated system of early childhood programs and services. The program addressed issues of organization, system planning and program content. Information from this event is being used as the Board explores system structure options for Missouri.

2. National Symposium on Early Childhood Science and Policy, June 26-27, Boston. Missouri was one of 14 states selected to participate in this symposium sponsored by the NGA Center for Best Practices, the National Association of State Legislatures and the Harvard Center for the Developing Child. Missouri's team of eight included Senator Rita Days (D-14), Representative Jeff Grisamore (R-47), Deborah Scott (DSS), Stan Johnson (DESE), Paula Nickelson (DHSS), Sue Stepleton (President & CEO of Parents as Teachers National Center), Thomas Watkins (St. Joseph attorney and Pre-K Panel chair) and Karen Bartz (CBEC chair). The symposium focused on factors that promote and inhibit positive early development, program attributes that are related to positive outcomes for children and the implications of this research for state policy making.

Early Childhood Comprehensive Services (ECCS) Plan

Consistent with the power of the Board to develop a comprehensive statewide long-range strategic plan for a cohesive early childhood system, the Board formally adopted this plan in May 2007 and will approve a revised plan in January 2009. Working cooperatively with an interdepartmental ECCS Steering Committee, the Board is supporting efforts to develop local ECCS infrastructures and to develop a parent leadership initiative. In March 2009, a request for a three-year extension of the planning and implementation effort will be submitted to the Maternal and Child Health Bureau.

Recommendations for the 2009 Legislative Session

The Board has gone on record as recommending the following actions for the 2009 Missouri legislative session and FY2010 budget. Further details on these recommendations can be found on the Board's Web site.

Recommendation 1. Establish and maintain a Missouri Quality Rating System (MO QRS) for licensed early education providers, with the necessary funding to implement an assessment system and the support services that are necessary to improve the quality of education.

Recommendation 2. Allocate sufficient funds to maintain the increased levels of child care subsidy support achieved last year AND begin a concerted effort to increase support on an annual basis with the goal of making child care subsidy levels equivalent to those used in many other Missouri family support programs by FY16.

Recommendation 3. Increase state funding for Missouri's Early Head Start (EHS) program to add new slots and to increase the funding for existing slots.

Recommendation 4. Allow the Coordinating Board for Early Childhood to become a member of the P-20 Council.

Plan of Work for 2009

The Board's 2009 work plan includes the following:

- Comprehensive System Governance – If the Board is to be successful in achieving its charge to coordinate a cohesive system of early childhood programs and services, the issue of system governance must be addressed. The Board will be making recommendations on this issue in 2009 after engaging in a number of activities to identify and analyze options.
- Pre-Kindergarten Education – The Board will be developing a plan of action for implementing the framework of pre-kindergarten envisioned by the Pre-K Panel by the fall of 2012.

- Professional Development – The Board will continue to work towards a coordinated system of professional development with the intent of using current resources to provide higher quality services to early childhood professionals in a more cost-effective manner.
- Education of Executive, Legislative and Judicial Leadership. Missouri’s team at the Harvard symposium recommended that we implement a plan for strategically educating the executive, legislative and judicial branches on the science of brain development, the importance of investing in the early years and the importance of investing in programs with proven outcomes. The Board would welcome the support of the Governor’s office in this endeavor.
- Involvement of Business Leaders. The Harvard team also recommended that we convene key private businesses and foundations in the state to determine how best to involve them in a public-private partnership for the benefit of Missouri’s young children. The Board will join with other Missouri organizations to apply for grants to fund such an event. Again the Board would welcome the support of the Governor’s office.
- Other Important Child Issues. Two other issues of interest are early screening to identify potential physical, mental and social developmental problems and home visitation programs. The Board’s ability to deal with these issues will be impacted by the availability of financial and personnel resources.

Members

- Karen Bartz, Ed.D., Hallmark retiree, Kansas City, chair
- Roseann Bentley, Greene County Commissioner, Springfield, executive committee
- Patsy Carter, Ph.D., Clinical Director, CY&F, DMH
- Teresa Mayberry Dunn, Ph.D., organizational consultant, St. Louis
- Tom Frawley, circuit judge, St. Louis, vice chair
- Monica Elizabeth Haaf, parent, Columbia
- Kent King, Ed.D., Commissioner, DESE
- Valeri Lane, Ph.D., Center for Human Services, Sedalia
- Nancie McAnagh, M.S.W., deputy director, DHSS
- Pattie P. Parris, Governor’s Office
- Stacey Owsley, Director, Missouri Head Start-State Collaboration Office, Columbia
- Sharon Rohrbach, Founder/Ambassador, Nurses for Newborns, Shrewsbury
- L. Carol Scott, Ph.D., Executive Dir., Missouri Child Care Resource and Referral Network
- Deborah Scott, Director, DSS, secretary
- Brenda Shields, CEO, United Way of Greater St. Joseph
- Susan Stepleton, Ph.D., CEO, Parents as Teachers National Center, St. Louis
- Kathy Thornburg, Ph.D., University of Missouri, Columbia, executive committee
- Joseph Ulveling, Family Ministries Specialist, Missouri Baptist Convention, Jefferson City

Administrative Accomplishments

- The Board launched its own Web site in December 2008. It can be accessed directly at dss.mo.gov/cbec/ or through a link from the Governor’s “boards and commissions” site.
- The Board met 13 times in 2008, seven times in person and six times by conference call. Each in-person meeting was approximately five hours in length. Each conference call was approximately two hours in length.
- The Board’s meeting schedule is generally the second Friday of the month during the legislative session and the second Tuesday of the month during the rest of the year.

- Officers include Karen Bartz, chair, Judge Tom Frawley, vice chair, and Deborah Scott, secretary. The executive committee includes the officers, Kathy Thornburg and Roseann Bentley.
- The board has had the support of a half-time staff person throughout the year. That person is currently employed through an arrangement with the Department of Social Services and is housed in the DSS office on Blue Ridge Blvd. in Kansas City.
- For FY09 the Board has an approved budget of \$110,000. Each of the departments represented on the board have allocated between \$10,000 and \$20,000 for use by the Board. A previous grant from the Kauffman Foundation for \$30,000 was fully expended in 2008, as was a \$10,000 contribution from the United Way of St. Joseph. A Hall Family Foundation grant for \$25,000 that will be expended in 2009.
- The Board and the Children's Services Commission are working collaboratively on a number of shared concerns.

approved 12/09/2008